PLAN AND SECTIONS OF A SLAVE SHIP.

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FIG. I.

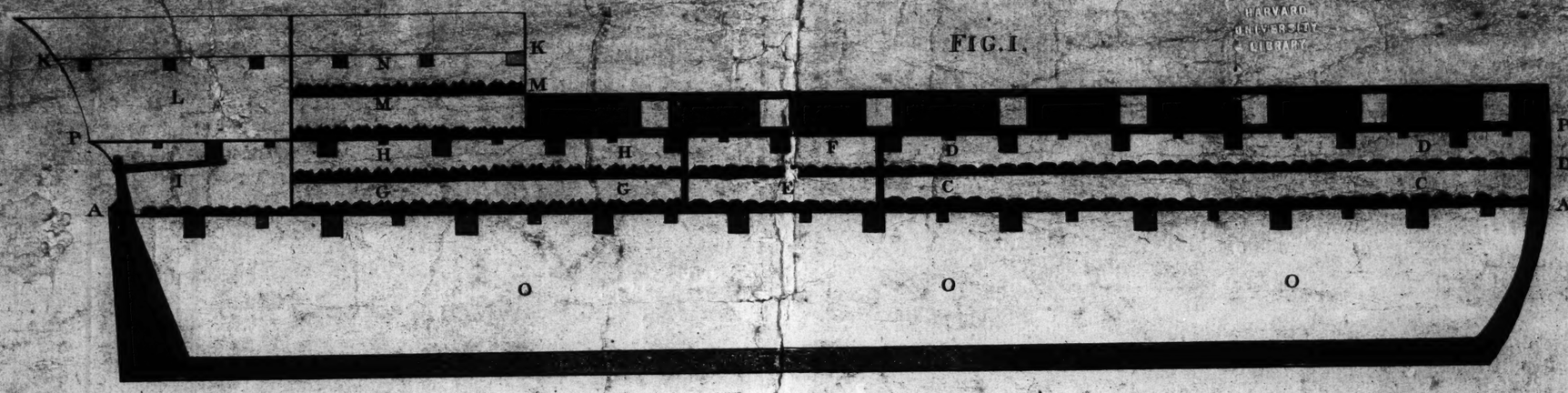


FIG. VII.

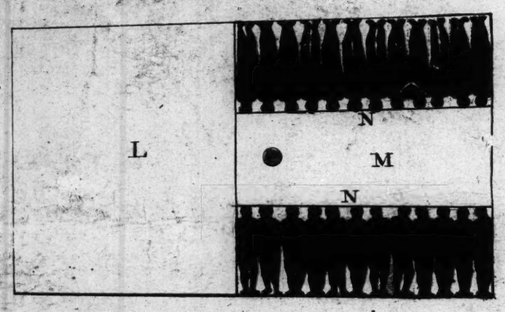


FIG. II.

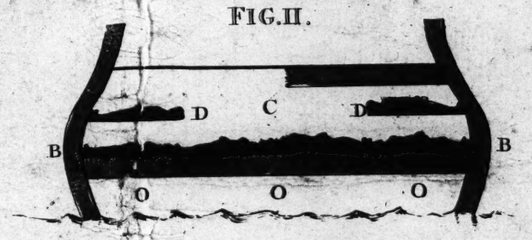


FIG. III.

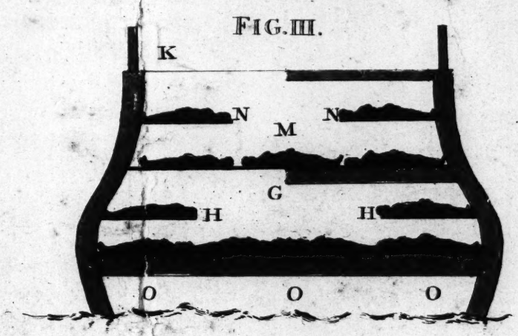
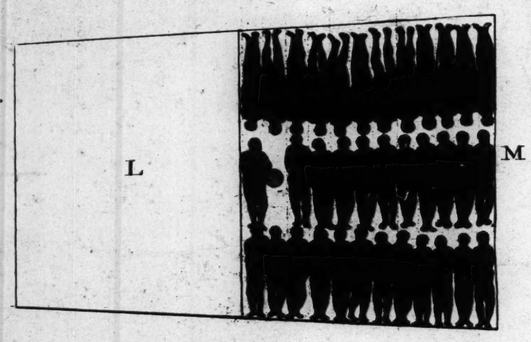


FIG. VI.



SCALE
of Twenty Feet.
one Eighth of an Inch to a Foot.

Published by James Phillips in George Yard, Lombard Street London 1789.

FIG. V.

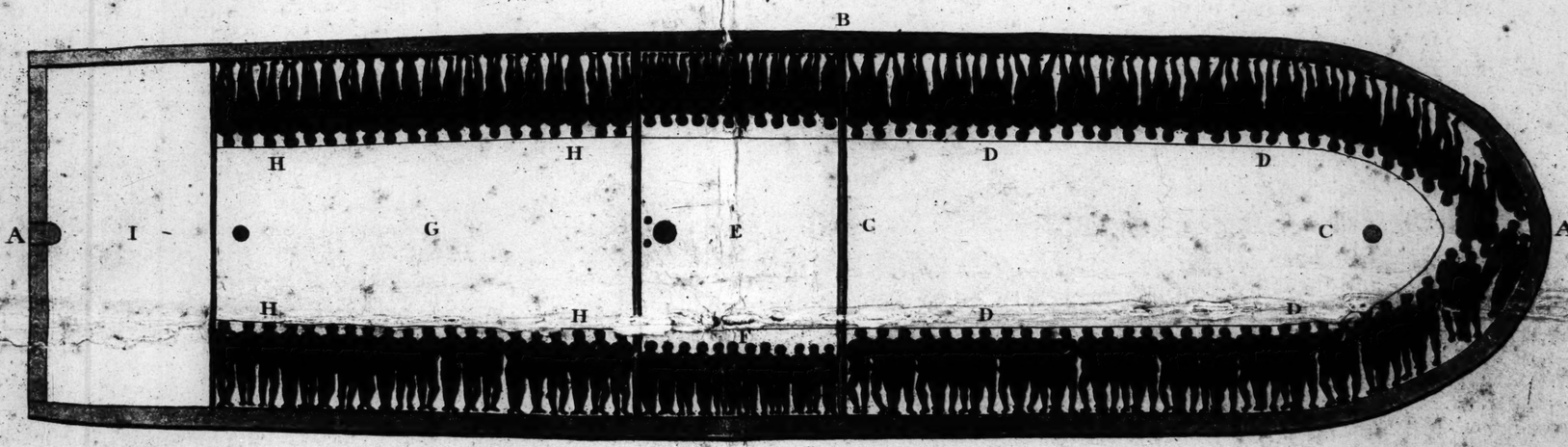
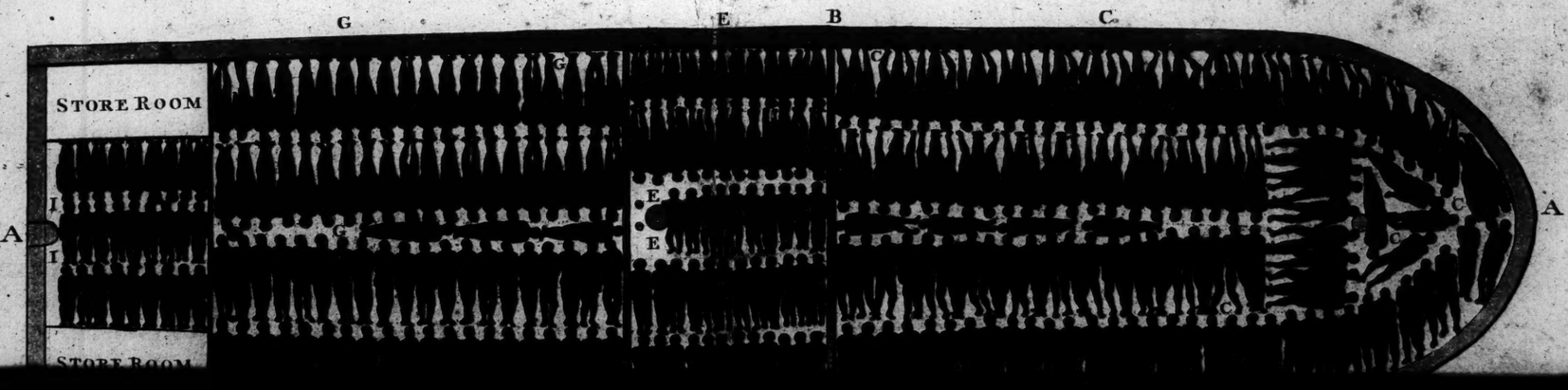


FIG. IV.



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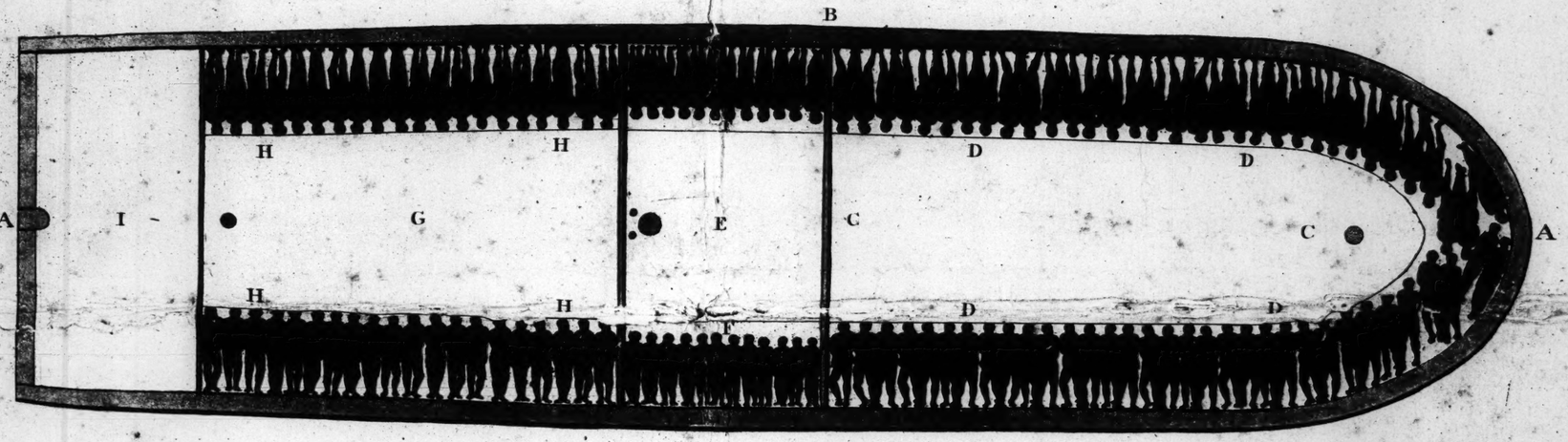
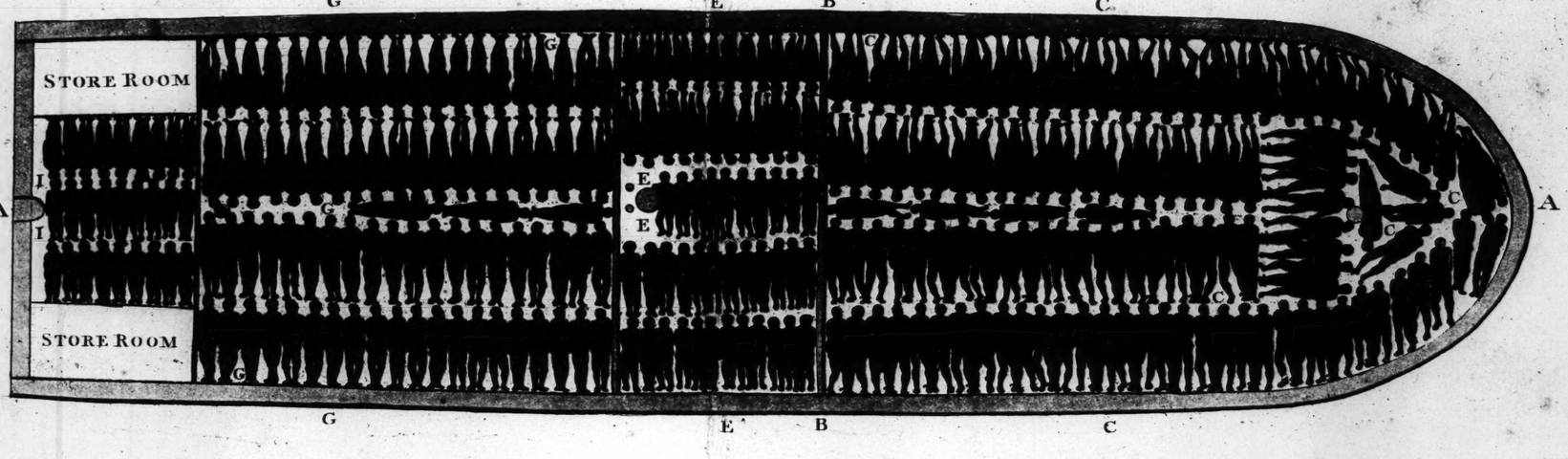


FIG. IV.



The PLAN and SECTIONS annexed exhibit a slave ship with the slaves stowed.* In order to give a representation of the trade against which no complaint of exaggeration could be brought by those concerned in it, the *Brooks* is here described, a ship well known in the trade, and the first mentioned in the report delivered to the House of Commons last year by Captain Parrey, who was sent to Liverpool by Government to take the dimensions of the ships employed in the African slave trade from that port. These plans and sections are on a scale of the 8th of an inch to a foot.

DIMENSIONS OF THE SHIP.

	Feet	Inches
Length of the *Lower Deck*, gratings and bulk-heads included at AA	100	0
Breadth of *Beam* on the *Lower Deck* inside, BB	25	4
Depth of *Hold*, OOO from cieling to cieling	10	0
Height between decks from deck to deck	5	8
Length of the *Mens Room*, CC on the lower deck	46	0
Breadth of the *Mens Room*, CC on the lower deck	25	4
Length of the *Platforms*, DD in the mens room	46	0
Breadth of the *Platforms* in mens rooms on each side	6	0
Length of the *Boys Room*, EE	13	9
Breadth of the *Boys Room*	25	0
Breadth of *Platforms*, FF in boys room	6	0
Length of *Womens Room*, GG	28	6
Breadth of *Womens Room*	23	6
Length of *Platforms*, HH in womens room	28	6
Breadth of *Platforms* in womens room	6	0
Length of the *Gun Room*, II on the lower deck	10	6
Breadth of the *Gun Room* on the lower deck	12	0
Length of the *Quarter Deck*, KK	33	6
Breadth of *Quarter Deck*	19	6
Length of the *Cabin*, LL	14	0
Height of the *Cabin*	6	2
Length of the *Half Deck*, MM	16	6
Height of the *Half Deck*	6	2
Length of the *Platforms*, NN on the half deck	16	6
Breadth of the *Platforms* on the half deck	6	0
Upper deck, PP		
Nominal tonnage — — 297		
Supposed tonnage by measurement 320		
Number of seamen — 45		

The number of slaves which this vessel actually carried appears from the accounts given to Captain Parrey by the slave-merchants themselves as follows:

Men — —	351	Total 609
Women — —	127	
Boys — —	90	
Girls — —	41	

The room allowed to each description of slaves in this plan is:

To the Men 6 feet by 1 foot 4 inches.
Women 5 feet 10 in. by 1 foot 4 in.
Boys 5 feet by 1 foot 2 in.
Girls 4 feet 6 in. by 1 foot.

* This is the usual manner of placing the slaves, but it varies according to the position of the ship, and the practice of different commanders.

With this allowance of room the utmost number that can be stowed in a vessel of the dimension of the *Brooks*, is as follows, (being the number exhibited in the plan) and is 1½ to a ton, viz. †

		On the Plan.	Actually carried.
Men—on the lower deck, at CC	124	190	351
Ditto on the platform of ditto, CC DD	66		
Boys—lower deck EE — —	58	82	90
Ditto—platform FF — —	24		
Women—lower deck, GG —	83	183	127
Ditto—platform, HH — —	40		
Women Half deck, MM —	36		
Platform ditto, NN —	24		
Girls Gun room, II — —		27	41
General total		482	609

The principal difference is in the *men*. It must be observed, that the *men*, from whom only insurrections are to be feared, are kept continually in irons, and must be stowed in the room allotted for them, which is of a more secure construction than the rest.

In this ship the number of men actually carried was —	351
The number of men stated in the plan at 1 foot 4 inches each	190
Difference —	161

As the ship on this plan would stow 42 women boys and girls in the places here allotted them more than she did carry, supposing that number of men taken from the mens room, and placed in their stead, this will reduce the number of men to 309 in the mens room; of course the room allowed them, instead of being 16 inches as in the plan, was in reality only 10 inches each; but if the whole number 351 were stowed in the mens room, they had only 9 inches each to lay in.

The men therefore, instead of lying on their backs, were placed, as is usual, in full ships, on their sides, or on each other. In which last situation they are not unfrequently found dead in the morning.

The longitudinal section, fig. I. shews the manner in which the slaves were placed on all the decks and platforms, which is also further illustrated by the transverse sections, fig. II. and III. By which it appears, that the height between the decks is 5 feet 8 inches, which, allowing 2 inches for the platform and its bearers, makes the height between the decks and the platform 2 feet 9 inches; but the beams and their knees, with the carlings, taking 4 inches on an average, this space is unequally divided, and above or under the platforms cannot be estimated at more than 2 feet 7 inches; so that the slaves cannot, when placed either on or under the platform, relieve themselves by sitting up; the very short ones excepted, nor can *they*, except on board the larger vessels. The average of nine vessels measured by Captain Parrey, being mostly large ships, was only 5 feet 2 inches. The height of the Venus between decks was 4 feet 2 inches; of the Kitty 4 feet 4 inches, both of which had platforms. In these smaller vessels therefore they have not 2 feet under or upon the platforms.

In fig. 1. under the upper deck PP, and the lower deck AA, the beams and the intervening carlings are represented by shaded squares. The beams are also introduced on one side of the transverse sections II. and III, in order to shew the space which a slave placed under a beam has to lie and breathe in.

† It must be noted, that every possible advantage of stowing is allowed in the plan. There are or ought to be in each apartment one or more poopoo tubs; there are also stanchions to support the platforms and decks; for which no deduction is made; but the deck is supposed clear of every incumbrance whatever.

It may be expected, from this mode of packing a number of our fellow-creatures, used in their own country to a life of ease, and from the anguish of mind their situation must necessarily create, that many of them fall sick and die. Instances sometimes occur of horrible mortality. The average is not less than 1-5th, or 20 per cent. The half deck is sometimes appropriated for a sick birth; but the *men slaves* are seldom indulged the privilege of being placed there, till there is little hope of recovery. The slaves are never allowed the least bedding, either sick or well; but are stowed on the bare boards, from the friction of which, occasioned by the motion of the ship, and their chains, they are frequently much bruised: and in some cases the flesh is rubbed off their shoulders, elbows, and hips.

It may not be improper to add a short account of the mode of securing, airing, and exercising the slaves.

The women and children are not chained, but the men are constantly chained two and two; the right leg of one to the left leg of the other, and their hands are secured in the same manner.

They are brought up on the main deck every day, about eight o'clock, and as each pair ascend, a strong chain, fastened by ring-bolts to the deck, is passed through their shackles; a precaution absolutely necessary to prevent insurrections.—In this state, if the weather is favourable, they are permitted to remain about one-third part of the twenty-four hours, and during this interval they are fed, and their apartment below is cleaned; but when the weather is bad, even those indulgencies cannot be granted them, and they are only permitted to come up in small companies, of about ten at a time, to be fed, where after remaining a quarter of an hour, each mess is obliged to give place to the next in rotation.

In *very* bad weather, some are unavoidably brought on deck: there being no other method of getting water, provisions, &c. out of the hold, but by removing those slaves who lie on the hatch-ways. The consequence of this violent change from their rooms, which are inconceivably hot, to the wind and rain, is their being attacked with coughs, swellings of the glands of the neck, fevers, and dysenteries; which are communicated by infection to the other slaves, and also to the sailors.

The only exercise of the men-slaves is their being made to jump in their chains; and this, by the friends of the trade, is called *dancing*.

To persons unacquainted with the mode of carrying on this system of trading in human flesh, these Plans and Sections will appear rather a fiction, than a real representation of a slave-ship. They will probably object, that there is no room for stowing cables, and such other utensils and stores as are usually placed between decks. In a slave ship (i. e. a full one) these articles are either deposited in the hold, or piled upon the upper deck; and from thence, in case of bad weather, or accidents, no small confusion is occasioned.—It may be also said, the slaves are placed so very close, that there is not room for the surgeon to visit and assist them: the fact is, that when the surgeon goes amongst them, he picks out his way as well as he can, by stepping between their legs. He frequently finds it to be impossible to afford them that relief which an humane man (and such there are even in this trade) would willingly give them. When attacked with fluxes, their situation is scarcely to be described. To give an instance, (as related by an eye-witness) as it serves to convey some idea, though a very faint one, of the sufferings of those unhappy beings whom we wantonly drag from their native country, and doom to perpetual labour and captivity:

"Some wet and blowing weather having occasioned the port-holes to "be shut, and the grating to be covered, fluxes and fevers among the "negroes ensued. While they were in this situation, my profession "requiring it, I frequently went down among them, till at length their "apartments became so extremely hot, as to be only sufferable for a very "short time. But the excessive heat was not the only thing that rendered "their situation intolerable. The deck, that is, the floor of their rooms, "was so covered with the blood and mucus which had proceeded from "them in consequence of the flux, that it resembled a slaughter-house. "It is not in the power of the human imagination to picture to itself "a situation more dreadful or disgusting. Numbers of the slaves had "fainted, they were carried upon deck, where several of them died, and "the rest were, with difficulty, restored. It had nearly proved fatal to "me also."*

Another objection which may be stated, is, that here no room is allowed for the sailors hammocks. In slave ships, while the slaves are on board, the sailors have no other lodging than the bare decks, or (in large ships) the tops. From this exposure, they often are wet for a long time together, the rains in those climates being frequent and extremely heavy. There is in wet weather a tarpawling placed over the gratings: if the sailors to shelter themselves creep under this, they are exposed to the noisome and infectious effluvia which continually exhale from the slaves below.

It appeared from the evidence given by the slave merchants last year before the House of Commons, that the employment of the seamen, viz. boating up the rivers after the negroes, guarding them on board, cleansing the vessel, &c. is of a nature offensive and dangerous beyond that of seamen in other services, and that the small-pox, measles, flux, and other contagious disorders, are frequent on board these ships.

It is therefore falsely said by the well-wishers to this trade, that the suppression of it will destroy a great nursery for seamen, and annihilate a very considerable source of commercial profit.—The Rev. Mr. Clarkson, in his admirable treatise on the Impolicy of the Trade, has proved from the most incontestable authority, that so far from being a nursery, it has been constantly and regularly a grave for our seamen; *for that in this traffick only, a greater proportion of men perish in* ONE *year, than in all the other trades of Great Britain in* TWO *years.*

Besides the time spent on the coast to complete their cargoes, which sometimes lasts several months, the slaves are from six to eight weeks on their passage from thence to the West-Indies.

Now let any person reflect on the situation of a number of these devoted people, thus managed and thus crammed together, and he must think it dreadful, even under every favourable circumstance of an humane captain, an able surgeon, fine weather, and a short passage. But when to a long passage are added, inhuman treatment, scanty and bad provisions, and rough weather, their condition is miserable beyond description. So destructive is this traffick in some circumstances, particularly in bad weather, when the slaves are kept below, and the gratings covered with tarpawlings, that a schooner, which carried only 140 slaves, meeting with a gale of wind which lasted eighteen hours, no less than 50 slaves perished in that small space of time.

As then the inhumanity of this trade must be universally admitted and lamented, people would do well to consider, that it does not often fall to the lot of individuals, to have an opportunity of performing so important a moral and religious duty, as that of endeavouring to put an end to a practice, which may, without exaggeration, be stiled one of the *greatest evils at this day existing upon the earth.*

* Falconbridge's Account of the Slave Trade, page 31.

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